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14. ABSTRACT

Russia's renewed influence has caused strategic paralysis in the West. The root cause is a failure to understand the true nature of Russian Smart Power, which, as a unique adaption of Joseph Nye's original theory, enables Russian strategists to manipulate their adversaries—seemingly at will. Nye defines Smart Power as the intelligent combination of coercive Hard Power with attractive Soft Power. However, Nye's theory fails to explain the mechanics of Russian power and the resultant rise of Russian influence because it does not account for Russian deception and obfuscation. The apparently disconnected and ambiguous nature of the individual elements of Russian Hard and Soft Power complicates the development of an effective strategy. A deconstruction of recent events in Ukraine, Syria, and Turkey analyzes the importance of the interplay between coercion and attraction, which reveals the existence of a unique brand of Russian Smart Power. This paper explains how Russian Smart Power uses deception to disrupt the awareness of its target, create opportunities to apply coercion, and legitimize its attractive Soft Power. The paper makes recommendations to apply Russian Smart Power in reverse to restore the balance and regain the lost strategic initiative.

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**DISRUPT, COERCE, LEGITIMIZE, ATTRACT: THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF
RUSSIAN SMART POWER**

By

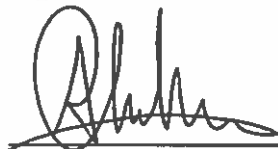**Wing Commander Andrew Chisholm**
Royal Air Force

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DISRUPT, COERCE, LEGITIMIZE, ATTRACT: THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF RUSSIAN SMART POWER

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

This paper is entirely my own work except as documented in footnotes.

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ABSTRACT

Russia's renewed influence has caused strategic paralysis in the West. The West must change its approach or risk losing Turkey from the NATO alliance, which would place Russia in a very advantageous position in the Middle East and Europe. The root cause of the weak response is a failure to understand the true nature of Russian Smart Power, which, as a unique adaption of Joseph Nye's original theory, enables Russian strategists to manipulate their adversaries—seemingly at will. Nye defines Smart Power as the intelligent combination of coercive Hard Power with attractive Soft Power. However, Nye's theory fails to explain the mechanics of Russian power and the resultant rise of Russian influence because it does not account for Russian deception and obfuscation. The apparently disconnected and ambiguous nature of the individual elements of Russian Hard and Soft Power complicates the development of an effective strategy. A deconstruction of recent events in Ukraine, Syria, and Turkey analyzes the importance of the interplay between coercion and attraction, which reveals the existence of a unique brand of Russian Smart Power. This paper explains how Russian Smart Power uses deception to disrupt the awareness of its target, create opportunities to apply coercion, and legitimize its attractive Soft Power. The paper makes recommendations to apply Russian Smart Power in reverse to restore the balance and regain the lost strategic initiative.

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Dedication

To my wife, my best friend. I cannot thank you enough for your unswerving support and unflappable temperament, without which, the creation of this paper would not have been possible.

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First and foremost, I am deeply grateful to Dr. Keith Dickson for his patience, humorous nature, and innate ability to recalibrate my over-active creative tendencies. I would also like to thank Mr. Jeffrey Turner for helping to foster the development of the concept and for his tireless dedication to lyrical perfection. Combined, their crucial input dramatically improved the quality of this paper and my enjoyment of the process.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

In March 2014, Russian intervention in Crimea and eastern Ukraine marked a watershed moment in post-Cold War relations between Vladimir Putin's Russia and the international community. Russia's use of military force in Syria exacerbated the flow of refugees into Europe, which contributed to the rise of nationalism and weakened the cohesion of the European Union. Russian influence on Turkey has the potential to weaken the NATO alliance and place Russia in a very advantageous position in the Middle East and Europe.

The Russian economy is weaker than at any point since the 1990s, after suffering a contracting GDP, thirteen per cent inflation, and more than a nine per cent drop in real wages.[1] Without a significant improvement in economic performance, the strain on Russian society threatens Putin's 2018 re-election campaign. As a result, Putin may be tempted to boost domestic support by taking military action. By 2019, the need for Russia to use Ukraine's gas infrastructure will be removed when a second natural gas pipeline is opened to Germany across the Baltic Sea, and a further pipeline is planned for completion through Turkey.[2] Freedom from energy export constraints through Ukraine may make Putin feel more inclined to take aggressive action.

The Western response to the annexation of Crimea and unacknowledged Russian support for national separatist violence in eastern Ukraine varied from outrage to weak

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[1] Sergei Guriev, "Russia's Constrained Economy," Council on Foreign Relations, *cfr.org* May/June 2016, under "In early 2013," http://www.cfr.org/russian-federation/russias-constrained-economy/p38047 (accessed November 29, 2016).

[2] Congressional Research Service, *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), 13; Azerbaijan desk, "Turkish Stream Pipelaying To Start Next Year," *naturalgasworld.com*, October 14, 2016, under "The completion date is the end of 2019," http://www.naturalgasworld.com/turkish-stream-laying-to-start-next-year-32136 (accessed February 21, 2017).

cautionary tones, yet none of the responses changed President Putin's behavior. The

divergent responses across the political spectrum reflected a failure to understand Russian

power, influence, and strategy, and the inability to define Russian power and intent led to

a weak collective response to Russian aggression. The West's basic ignorance of

Russia's interests and historical role in Europe and Anatolia makes Russian action seem

unexpected, which may encourage Vladimir Putin to take further action that could raise

tensions to Cold War levels.

American political scientist Joseph Nye describes the mechanics of power as an

interplay of influential forces designed to change behavior along a spectrum with two

poles: attraction and coercion. He developed the theory of *Smart Power* to prove that

modification of a state's behavior can be achieved using an "intelligent combination of

Soft and Hard Power in order to achieve policy aims."[3] *Soft Power* represents attractive

forces and *Hard Power* represents coercive forces. While the nature of Russian power is

a continuing subject of scholarly debate, an initial appraisal indicates that Russia only

understands Hard Power. Even Joseph Nye does not believe that Russia is capable of

using Soft Power.[4] The debate over the primacy of Russian Hard or Soft Power is

inconsequential, because the West has been blind to Russia's uses of its own brand of

Smart Power. As a result, the West has been out-flanked and out-maneuvered in Europe

and the Middle East.

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[3] Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S Nye, *A Smarter, More Secure America*, (Washington DC: The CSIS Press, 2007), 7.
[4] Joseph S. Nye, "What China and Russia Don't Get About Soft Power" *ForeignPolicy.com,* April 29, 2013, under "Russia Has To Use "Hard Power, Including Military Force,"
http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/04/29/what-china-and-russia-dont-get-about-soft-power/ (accessed September 7, 2016).

However, an important conceptual development of Smart Power by Mai'a Cross revealed the need to apply the theory in a more nuanced way by understanding that Smart Power tools can be disaggregated from the type of power. Coercive Hard Power instruments can be used to attract, while Soft Power can be employed with a traditionally coercive instrument. Thus, an examination of the interplay of Hard and Soft Power reveals the true nature of a unique brand of Russian Smart Power.[5] This paper argues that Russia employs a unique brand of Smart Power that features timely and carefully coordinated deception to enable and to disguise its Hard and Soft Power instruments. Russian Smart Power is further legitimized and enhanced by the Russian worldview of power polarity that has emerged since the end of the Cold War.

The second chapter of this paper describes Joseph Nye's Smart Power theory in order to provide a conceptual framework, highlighting target actor awareness as the key element that converts Soft and Hard Power into Smart Power. Nye's critique of Russian Soft Power is based on his view that it is limited by a cultural barrier, and its failure to conform to the concept of Soft Power as a well-intentioned attractive force undermines its effectiveness. The third chapter examines Russian Smart Power in action across Ukraine, Turkey, and Syria in order to demonstrate how *opposed actors* are coerced, how *neutral actors* are attracted by the Russian worldview of power polarity, and how Russian Soft Power increases the resilience of *aligned actors*. It concludes that the successful attraction of opposed actors, despite the weakness of Russian Soft Power, means that a powerful deception strategy is a crucial additional component of Russian Smart Power.

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[5] Mai'a K. Davis Cross, "Europe, a smart power?" *International Politics* 48, no. 6 (November 2011): 694. http://search.proquest.com.nduezproxy.idm.oclc.org/docview/910183536?accountid=12686 (accessed August 8, 2016).

The fourth chapter analyzes how the history and enabling structures of Russian deception facilitates Russian Smart Power, and how the execution of Russian deception undermines the resistance of opposed actors. The fifth chapter builds on Nye's theory of Smart Power by synthesizing the true nature of the unique brand of Russian Smart Power. Finally, the sixth chapter of this paper offers recommendations for offensive and defensive action that will increase the transparency of the strategic environment and facilitate the development of a coherent strategy to pierce the fog of Russian deception, restrict its Hard Power options, discredit its Soft Power, and degrade Putin's unique brand of Smart Power.

Chapter 2 - The Concepts of Smart Power

Smart Power gained global acceptance as a political science theory when U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton used the term in 2009 during her confirmatory hearing. She described Smart Power as "the full range of tools at our disposal - diplomatic, economic, military, political, legal, and cultural - picking the right tool, or combination of tools, for each situation."[1] Joseph Nye defines Smart Power as an intelligent instrument of policy and strategy that combines coercive Hard Power with co-optive Soft Power.[2] Nye defined the concept of Hard Power as the coercive use of military force and Soft Power as attraction through persuasion, or even better, through co-option, which requires the target actor to be truly invested in the achievement of the objective of its own free will.[3] Ultimately, Soft Power leverages an ever-present attraction that originates primarily from the popular culture or vibrant economy of a liberal society to facilitate the achievement of strategic intent.[4]

Nye's Smart Power model provides a useful conceptual framework to help visualize the forces at work. Soft Power acts on groups in "concentric rings," with a magnet of attraction in the center that represents the objective. Aligned actors, who are generally in favor of existent policies, are already situated near the center and are, therefore, predisposed to cooperate. However, neutral actors are distributed further from the center and require a stronger magnet to achieve the same attractive effect. Near the extremities of the concentric rings, the need arises for a coercive force to push the

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[1] U.S. Department of State, "Nomination Hearing To Be Secretary of State," *state.gov,* January 13, 2009, under "I believe that American leadership," http://www.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2009a/01/115196.htm (accessed September 21, 2016).
[2] Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye, *A Smarter, More Secure America,* CSIS Commission on Smart Power (Washington DC: The CSIS Press, 2007), 7.
[3] Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power* (New York: Publicffairs, 2004), 11.
[4] Joseph S. Nye, *The Future of Power* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2011), 14.

opposed actors in the intended direction.[5] Crucially, the simultaneous application of equal measures of coercive Hard and attractive Soft Power within this two-dimensional model generates the potential for destructive interference if the target actor becomes aware of deliberate attraction and coercion from the same authority.[6] Destructive interference creates a cognitive dissonance that undermines Soft Power. As a result, the target actor actively resists and becomes immune to attractive forces.

Therefore, if Smart Power is to be effective, the target actor's awareness of the integrated nature of the forces acting on it must be minimized. Nye believes that this can only be achieved by conveying intent clearly and openly, or risk undermining Smart Power's attractive qualities.[7] If the Soft Power attractive force is strong and generic, it will overpower the destructive interference because of its ubiquitous and unrelated nature. Nye's Smart Power theory requires the tools of coercion to be overt and its attractive component to be powerful, but naturally occurring and unforced.

Nye posits that the Russians have fundamentally misunderstood the concept of Soft Power and that they are "failing miserably" by attempting to synthesize a dubious attractive force, which Nye believes led them to resort singularly to coercive measures to translate power into policy success.[8] Therefore, according to Nye, Russia is not using Smart Power, only Hard Power. Nye believes that Russia is failing in its application of Soft Power based on cultural limitations. The Iron Curtain that once served as the physical barrier separating the Russian people from the rest of the world has been

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[5] Joseph S. Nye, *The Powers to Lead* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 33.
[6] Ibid., 41.
[7] Ibid., 122.
[8] Joseph S. Nye, "What China and Russia Don't Get About Soft Power" *ForeignPolicy.com,* April 29, 2013, under "Russia has to use "hard power, including military force," http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/04/29/what-china-and-russia-dont-get-about-soft-power/ (accessed September 7, 2016).

replaced by the Russian language as a cultural barrier, which works against Russian attempts to employ Soft Power.[9] In terms of Nye's Smart Power model, Russian Soft Power is effective only within the inner reaches of the concentric rings where language does not present a cultural barrier. If the target actor is situated beyond the cultural barrier, Russian Soft Power is weak.

The existence of a Soft Power cultural barrier is a truism of any society. A foreign language can prevent the effective communication of intentions, whether positive to attract or negative to coerce. Ideologically-based messages are hard to convey to a foreign culture and can easily be misunderstood or ignored, and sociological differences can negate entirely the attractive qualities of one culture to another. Nevertheless, a weak and constrained Soft Power attractive force does not preclude the presence of a Smart Power strategy.

By contrast to Nye's initial theory of Hard and Soft Power mechanics, Mai'a Cross introduced the concept of the disaggregation of the tools from the power mode. A Soft Power tool, such as the control of a nation's energy supply, can be used to coerce with great effect, while a Hard Power tool, such as military power, can co-opt or persuade through multi-national training exercises and humanitarian relief. This means that attractive forces can be actively created, which broadens Nye's notion of Soft Power as a generic attractive force. Nevertheless, Cross's definition remains within the bounds of Nye's classification of Soft Power as inherently well-intentioned. This new understanding of Smart Power as "simultaneous strategic coercion and co-option" offers

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[9] The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, *Fog of Falsehood: Russian Strategy of Deception and the Conflict in Ukraine* (Helsinki: Grano Oy, 2016), 47.

an opportunity to examine how an active Smart Power strategy is employed in the contemporary security environment.[10]

Although clear examples of simultaneous Russian strategic coercion and attraction exist, Russian Soft Power, on the surface, appears to play very little part in the outcome. Russian attempts to use Soft Power to persuade the international community of its benign strategic intent have broadly failed, and yet, its successful influence in Ukraine, Turkey, and Syria is undeniable. Nye's theory of Smart Power does not explain how Smart Power functions in Russia's case, given that the seemingly disconnected individual elements of Hard and Soft Power are respectively ambiguous and weak. The critical enabling component of Russian Smart Power is deception. Although Nye's Smart Power model captures the key element of the target actor's awareness of the forces at work, it relies on naturally occurring, well-intentioned, and powerful attraction to minimize the destructive interference. Nye's Smart Power does not account for the use of Smart Power by a leader, government, and military that perfected the art of systemic deception. The next chapter analyzes Russian Smart Power in action by deconstructing its components in order to create an understanding of how Russia used Smart Power to enhance its influence.

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[10] Mai'a K. Davis Cross, "Europe, a smart power?" *International Politics* 48, no. 6 (November 2011): 694. http://search.proquest.com.nduezproxy.idm.oclc.org/docview/910183536?accountid=12686 (accessed August 8, 2016).

Chapter 3 - Russian Smart Power in Action

The creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in 1991 was Russian President Boris Yeltsin's solution to the unexpected demand for sovereignty from Ukraine and Belarus. Cooperation was restricted to economic concerns, which limited the influence Russia could exert on security matters.[1] The lack of direct control over the former republics of the Soviet Union created a split between progressive Russian politicians who sought to replace regional hegemony of the "near abroad" with European integration, and nationalists, who saw the CIS as a vehicle to return Russia to great power status. When the Russian economy declined at an average annual rate of 6.8 per cent between 1992 and 1998,[2] and NATO began incorporating former Soviet republics, the progressives lost out to the Russian nationalists.[3]

According to Martin Smith, the weakness of the Russian economy forced Vladimir Putin to accept that Russia's status was, at best, a "reviving great power."[4] Soon after the nadir of Russia's post-Cold War global influence, NATO intervened in Kosovo, a country located within the Russian sphere of interest. The decision to avoid pursuing a U.N. Security Council resolution removed the Russian opportunity to veto the action, which highlighted the humiliating lack of Russian influence in European matters.[5] This episode, combined with the failure of Russia to balance power against the U.S. by unifying France and Germany against the 2003 invasion of Iraq, confirmed to Vladimir Putin the need to change his strategy.[6]

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[1] Leszek Buszynski, *Russian Foreign Policy After the Cold War* (Wesport: Praeger Publishers, 1996), 96.
[2] Congressional Research Service, *Russian Political, Economic, and Security Issues and U.S. Interests* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, March 31, 2014), 34.
[3] Ibid., 88.
[4] Martin A. Smith, *Power in the Changing Global Order* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2012), 114.
[5] Ibid., 117.
[6] Ibid., 107.

First, Putin initiated a comprehensive restructure of Russian domestic institutions, which removed much of the national democratic oversight by weakening the power of the Federal Assembly and granted the President "unified executive authority."[7] Second, the Russian worldview altered, in 2000, from viewing itself as a dominant actor within a "competitive multipolarity" in order to balance American unipolar power,[8] to a position, in 2006, that accepted the need for a more cooperative stance within a "concert-based multipolarity."[9] This change signaled the political will to work with the U.S., China, India, the Middle East, and the European Union in order to advance Russian interests. Foreign Minister Lavrov struck a harmonious chord in 2006 when he commented that Russian history and geographic heritage acts as a "cultural and civilizational bridge" that enables it to "play a unique role in the international orchestra."[10]

These changes compensated for the weakness of Russian Soft Power by creating a "sovereign democracy," or in other words, a paradigm of political brute force shielded by a thin veil of benign cooperation. Defined as the propensity to "bully, threaten, invade, amputate, and eventually, annex" neighboring countries in the name of "defending Russian minorities and fighting fascism," the term "Putinism" is a synonym for Hard Power.[11] Although the new Russian strategy enabled unilateral action without any internal political consultation,[12] it also sought positive interaction with other like-minded heads of state to attempt to co-opt them in the attainment of Russian goals. Therefore, Putinism may appear abhorrent to leaders of liberal democratic states, but it actually

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[7] Ibid., 125.
[8] Ibid., 140.
[9] Ibid., 144.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Marcel H. Van Herpen, *Putin's Wars* 2nd ed. (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 255.
[12] Ibid., 124.

legitimizes the use of Russian Hard Power in the eyes of neutral autocratic realists charged with the defense of a diaspora under threat. Also, it enhances Russian Soft Power because those rulers approve of the ability to stand up to the imposing unipolar military might of the U.S. This suggests that the Russian worldview of "concert-based multipolarity" is an important component of the unique brand of Russian Smart Power because neutral actors are no longer politically isolated from Russia, as they were during the turmoil at the end of the Cold War.[13] This sets the conditions for Russian Soft Power to act where it once could not, and it is made all the more effective because this is a new, unfamiliar type of approach from Moscow.[14]

The Russian nationalist agenda is fuelled by a complex history of ideological, religious, and ethnic attachment to its geographic neighbors. For example, Russians do not see Crimea as a Ukrainian possession because it was a gift from Nikita Khrushchev in 1954 to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Russia's union with Ukraine, and also because seventy per cent of its population is ethnic Russian.[15] The Russian Prime Minister, Dmitry Medvedev, described Russians and Ukrainians as "two fraternal peoples" that "may not be separated,"[16] and many Russian commentators, including President Putin, believe that the existence of the sovereign nation of Ukraine is the result of an aberration of history that left 8.3 million Russians living outside of Russian control in an "artificial state"[17] that rightfully belongs to Russia.[18] Therefore, the idea of Ukraine as an integrated nation of the European Union and NATO is inherently unacceptable. In

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[13] Smith, 144.
[14] Van Herpen, 255.
[15] Buszynski, 130.
[16] Van Herpen, 241.
[17] Ibid., 240.
[18] Congressional Research Service, *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), 2.

essence, Ukrainian subordination to a Russian-controlled Eurasian alliance is understood as an inescapable precondition for Russian power revival. According to Vladimir Putin, Russian interest in Crimea and Ukraine is "not about land," but rather the survival of Russian "history, spirituality, and statehood."[19] This reinterpretation of the status quo functions as an unsubtle leverage of Russian nationalism in order to increase domestic support for Russian policies.

The annexation of Crimea in March 2014, was the necessary first hurdle to reverse the gradual slide towards Ukrainian integration into the European Union that arguably began with the popular movement dubbed "the Orange Revolution," which advocated for European integration as a way to improve government accountability and restore a sense of justice.[20] A character assessment of Vladimir Putin written during his training as an intelligence officer criticized his lack of an appropriate sense of danger.[21] Although this character trait may enable him to pursue an aggressive foreign policy where others may take a more cautious line, by his own admission, he is not a gambler.[22] Therefore, an innovative approach would be required if Putin was to force the creation of a Eurasian alliance that included Ukraine without generating discord at home and insurmountable opposition abroad.

According to Kristin Ven Bruusgaard, Russia has mastered the art of the coordination of conventional and unconventional military forces in a strategically

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[19] Marvin Kalb, *Imperial Gamble: Putin, Ukraine, and the New Cold War* (Brookings Institution Press, 2015), 228.

[20] Anders Aslund, and Anatol Lieven, "Kuchmagate: Political Crisis in Ukraine?" *Carnegieendowment.org* February 14, 2001, under "Introduction," http://carnegieendowment.org/2001/02/14/kuchmagate-political-crisis-in-ukraine-event-274 (accessed November 28, 2016).

[21] Nataliya Gevorkyan, Natalya Timakova, and Andrei Kolesnikov, *First Person: An Astonishingly Frank Self-Portrait By Russia's President Vladimir Putin* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2000), 37.

[22] Ibid.

prepared environment brought about by diplomacy and denial. She believes Russian

intervention in Ukraine signifies a new epoch of strategic innovation.[23] By contrast, John

Herbst posits that Putin's denial of Russian military involvement was purely designed to

maintain high domestic support amid an unpopular deployment.[24] This suggests that,

despite the existence of Russian unified executive authority, domestic opinion appears to

remain a critically important consideration. In reality, Russia has adapted the Smart

Power concept of simultaneous strategic coercion and attraction to fit the Russian

strategic culture and worldview, and in so doing, has devised an innovative model to

address Russian strategic challenges.

The manipulation of Russian symbols as a Soft Power component of the Smart

Power strategy reveals a deliberate attempt to use Russian culture in order to create an

attractive effect. In 2005, the Russian government encouraged the public display of

orange and black striped ribbons whose origins can be traced to the St. George military

medal, instituted by the Romanov dynasty in 1769. This reminder of the extensive reach

of Imperial Russian interests intended to kindle nostalgia and kinship in the "near

abroad" and also to act as a cultural counterweight to the Orange Revolution associated

with Ukrainian political drift towards greater integration with the European Union.[25] In

addition, political scientists Tomina Lankina and Kinga Niemczyk claim that Russian

television shows, which Vladimir Putin sees as key contributors to Russian Soft Power,

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[23] Kristin Ven Bruusgaard, "Crimea and Russia's Strategic Overhaul," *Parameters* 44 no. 3 (Autumn 2014): 81-90. http://search.proquest.com.nduezproxy.idm.oclc.org/docview/1628380476?accountid=12686 (accessed August 8, 2016).

[24] John Herbst, "Assessing and Addressing Russian Revanchism," *Prism* 6, no.2, (2016): 176.

[25] Catherine A. Fitzpatrick, "From Medal of Valor to Ubiquitous Propaganda Symbol: the History of the St. George Ribbon," *Interpretermag.com,* May 10, 2015, under "According to one story," http://www.interpretermag.com/russia-this-week-from-medal-of-valor-to-ubiquitous-propaganda-symbol-the-history-of-the-st-george-ribbon/ (accessed September 7, 2016).

act as an attractive force throughout the Russian sphere of influence because they are more popular than locally produced shows in Russian-speaking former Soviet republics, and they invariably carry a highly nationalist, pro-Russian message.[26] Finally, the relative strength of the Russian economy compared with those of the neigboring former Soviet republics acts as a migration magnet, which may also have affected the calculus of people living in Crimea at the point of annexation.[27]

Although the ubiquitous nature of these examples of Russian Soft Power suggests the existence of a prolific Soft Power strategy, the argument is not compelling. Mixed domestic opinion over the contemporary relevance of the message of the ribbon, the limited ability to export Russian TV shows beyond Russian-speaking audiences, and the hesitation Russian aggression causes to foreign investors may mean that the effective target audience is limited to those who already support Russian aims.[28] While these Russian Soft Power components appear weak from a Western perspective, their nationalist appeal contributes to the resilience of aligned actors within the Russian cultural barrier, which provides Vladimir Putin time and space to act.

The intervention in eastern Ukraine that followed the annexation of Crimea represents the attempt by Moscow to clear the second hurdle to reverse the Ukrainian integration into Europe. The coercive component of Russia's Smart Power strategy

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[26] Tomila Lankina and Kinga Niemczyk, "What Putin gets about soft power," *Washingtonpost.com,* April 15, 2015, under "At the center of Russia's strategy," https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/04/15/what-putin-gets-about-soft-power/ (accessed September 7, 2016).
[27] Tomila Lankina and Kinga Niemczyk, "What Putin gets about soft power," *Washingtonpost.com,* April 15, 2015, under "If not by tanks, then by banks?" https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/04/15/what-putin-gets-about-soft-power/ (accessed September 7, 2016).
[28] Catherine A. Fitzpatrick, "From Medal of Valor to Ubiquitous Propaganda Symbol: the History of the St. George Ribbon," *Interpretermag.com,* May 10, 2015, under "Russian specialists," http://www.interpretermag.com/russia-this-week-from-medal-of-valor-to-ubiquitous-propaganda-symbol-the-history-of-the-st-george-ribbon/ (accessed September 7, 2016).

involved the covert provision of arms and guerrilla fighters to support the unrest triggered by Ukrainian separatists. On August 5, 2014, the arrival of a 280-vehicle humanitarian aid convoy from Russia into Ukraine carrying "medical aid, baby food, sleeping bags and generators"[29] coincided with the appearance of large formations of well-armed, highly organized but anonymous "little green men"[30] that supported the separatist movement in eastern Ukraine by engaging in direct combat with Ukrainian forces. However, the use of Russian conventional military force for coercive effect was obfuscated by the highly-publicized humanitarian aid being delivered to civilians by the deployed forces. This represents an intelligent use of the military to produce an ambiguous indirect coercive force on the Ukrainian government, and simultaneously present an overt attractive image to the international community through a highly visible action aimed at alleviating human suffering. By simultaneously acting as a neutral with masked actions of a belligerent, Russia is demonstrating the use of Smart Power.

In addition, Vladimir Putin increased pressure on Ukraine to integrate into the Eurasian Union by threatening the "'de-industrialization' of multiple sectors within its economy,"[31] through the routing of gas exports to Europe around Ukraine. Ukrainian gas pipelines and storage facilities supplied forty per cent of all Russian gas exports to Europe in 2014.[32] At the same time, however, Gazprom, the Russian government's energy corporation, offered to sell gas to Ukraine at a sixty-two per cent discount, despite

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[29] The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, *Fog of Falsehood: Russian Strategy of Deception and the Conflict in Ukraine* (Helsinki: Grano Oy, 2016), 180.
[30] Ven Bruusgaard, 81-90.
[31] Van Herpen, 242.
[32] Congressional Research Service, *Ukraine: Current Issues*, 13.

the existence of unpaid debts, in recognition of the need to alleviate the effects of a cold winter.[33]

Furthermore, the Finnish Institute of International Affairs highlights an unsuccessful Russian Soft Power attempt to leverage Hungarian nationalism by suggesting that Hungary should intervene in western Ukraine. This diplomatic maneuver was designed to legitimize Russian military activity in eastern Ukraine by suggesting that Hungary should accede parts of western Ukraine into its territory. This unsubtle move coincided with the observation of the hundredth anniversary of the First World War and intended to remind Hungarians of the fact that this area was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It relied on empathy for the Russian cause created by the narrative of an honest Russian attempt to defy U.S. interference in the region, but the message lacked plausibility and was not accorded the necessary emphasis within the Hungarian media.[34]

Russian Smart Power employed in Ukraine consisted of an obfuscated and indirect coercion, followed by an overt coercive use of the economic lever of power. A highly-publicized humanitarian gesture was employed to gain favor with the international community, but the covert coercive force provided by the unacknowledged Russian military presence intended to achieve psychological dominance over the Ukrainian population and separate them from their political leadership. Russia also applied simultaneous coercion and attraction by supporting the referenda in Crimea and eastern Ukraine that provided the population of the Donbas region a sense of legitimacy, while undermining the sovereignty of the Ukrainian government. Russian politicians referred to the "Donetsk National Republic," and to "the Prime Minister of Donetsk," which

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[33] Van Herpen, 242; Congressional Research Service, *Ukraine: Current Issues*, 13.
[34] The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 237.

offered a fig leaf of legitimacy under the notion of a liberal democracy and attempted to cast Russian behavior in a benign light to the international community.[35] As a result of the confused situation, Russian coercion of Ukraine elicited a weak response from the international community, which undoubtedly undermined the resolve of certain elements of the Ukrainian government. The Minsk protocol, signed on 5 September 2014, placed no demands on Russia to withdraw its military forces from Ukraine.

Russia inserted itself into the geopolitical struggle in Syria, not only to protect its client state and its access to the Mediterranean Sea, but also to increase its ability to influence regional affairs in order to broaden the scope and scale of Russian power. David Kilcullen posits that Vladimir Putin considers Russian interests in Ukraine, Turkey, and Syria to be strands of an interconnected web where the application of power in one theater of operations results in a desirable effect in another.[36] Russia aligned global expectations of its behavior in Syria to that of the role of a "protector" in the multinational fight against violent extremist groups by releasing images of precision air strikes and cruise missile strikes from Russian warships on terrorist groups for the benefit of the Western media audience.[37] In reality, the presence of Russian military forces in Syria had an indirect coercive effect on Turkey, made all the more effective by the Turkish downing of a Russian SU-24 fighter aircraft over Syria in November 2015, but also indirectly to Iraq, Israel, and Jordan. The downing of the fighter aircraft offered a legitimate reason to deploy the most advanced air-defense system in the world into the region, immediately complicating the strategic picture for all the actors involved. The

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[35] Ibid., 105-109.
[36] David Kilcullen, *Blood Year* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 196.
[37] Ibid.,191.

Russian S-400, S-300, and Kirov-based surface-to-air missile systems now in place in the region have the capability to deny the Turkish air force access to large swathes of their own airspace and to deter a repeated miscalculation of this nature, as well as denying at will any other military aircraft intending to operate in the area.

Russian strategists recognized the shoot-down incident as an opportunity to establish a Russian Smart Power strategy to improve the Russian geopolitical position. In order to reinforce domestic public opinion and attract the support of the international community, Moscow portrayed the incident as a grievous and unjustified attack on the Russian military, which had been acting as a force for good by working towards the common goal of the destruction of the global threat posed by ISIS. As occurred in Ukraine, the indirect coercive effect of the Russian military preceded Russian economic sanctions on Turkey, which reminded President Erdogan of the extent of Turkey's interdependence with Russia. The sanctions caused a loss of ten billion dollars to the Turkish economy, an equivalent of 1.4 per cent of its GDP, and threatened to terminate a twenty billion dollar Russian investment in Turkish nuclear power[38] as well as the "Turkish Stream" gas pipeline from Russia to Turkey across the Black Sea. Given that Turkey imports fifty-five per cent of its natural gas from Russia,[39] the loss of the new pipeline would directly affect the future expansion of the Turkish economy and cause much greater economic damage. President Erdogan elected to offer a humiliating public

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[38] Polina Devitt, Dmitry Solovyov, and Jack Stubbs, "Factbox: Impact of Russian sanctions on trade ties with Turkey," *reuters.com* June 27, 2016, under "PROJECTS," http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-russia-turkey-ties-fac-idUSKCN0ZD27M "accessed November 28, 2016).

[39] Selin Girit, "Turkey faces big losses as Russia sanctions bite," *bbc.com* 2 January, 2016, under "Gas Still Vital," http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35209987 (accessed November 28, 2016).

apology to Vladimir Putin, which cleared the path to greater Russian geopolitical leverage over Turkey than existed under the status-quo ante.[40]

The opportunity to execute the Soft Power component of the Russian Smart Power strategy arose in July 2016, following the failed coup in Turkey. During the immediate aftermath of the attempted coup, President Erdogan's position was uncertain and the international community's support was notable by its absence. The fact that Vladimir Putin provided an immediate offer of unconditional support to President Erdogan, despite the strained nature of their recent diplomatic relationship, betrays the existence of a Russian Smart Power strategy. The coercive measures were insufficient to meet the Russian ends, and the Soft Power strategy does not stand scrutiny as a plausible, stand-alone, attractive force.[41] Following a similar pattern to the Russian Smart Power strategy in Ukraine, Vladimir Putin indirectly coerced Turkey using the veiled intent of the military forces in Syria and then followed up with the overt threat of sanctions. He then attempted to attract Turkey by using an opportunistic and cynical diplomatic advance.

Russian sovereign democracy enhances Russian Soft Power appeal to authoritarian neutral actors and creates aligned actor resilience within the cultural barrier, but the ability of Russian Soft Power to attract opposed actors situated beyond the cultural barrier requires further explanation. The Russian mimic of the long-established Soft Power strategy used by Western governments that emphasizes the attempt to avoid

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[40] Congressional Research Service, *Turkey: Background and U.S. Relations In Brief* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, August 4, 2016), 9.
[41] Homepage, Turkey, Diplomacy, "Turkey thanks Putin for unconditional support over coup attempt," *hurriyetdailynews.com*, February 12, 2017, under "Turkey has expressed its satisfaction," http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-thanks-putin-for-unconditional-support-over-coup-attempt--.aspx?PageID=238&NID=102062&NewsCatID=510 (accessed February 12, 2017).

civilian casualties by releasing precision weapons employment footage to the world's

media provides a thin disguise to the true nature of Russian Hard Power in Syria and

Ukraine. These powerful images not only attempt to legitimize the notion that Russia is a

responsible power broker in Syria equal in restraint to Western forces, but also by

inference, they counter the narrative of an uncontrolled, indiscriminate Russian

intervention in Ukraine. In addition, the accompanying narrative focuses singularly on

the intent to fight terrorists, rather than the West's partners of choice. However, evidence

exists of indiscriminate Russian acts of force in both theaters, including the repeated use

of cluster munitions on civilians within the populated Syrian city of Aleppo[42] and the

employment of massive area artillery attacks in Ukraine,[43] which are all tactics used in

Chechnya and part of Russian military doctrine dating back to the Soviet Union.[44]

Nevertheless, the use of weapons employment footage serves the purpose of confusing

and misdirecting attention away from the true target and nature of Russian tactics, while

presenting the opportunity for neutral and opposed actors to justify their own lack of

opposition to Russian indiscriminate actions.

Martin Smith opines that Russia has "shown little interest in Soft Power" and that

the "analytical applicability and utility of Soft Power in the Russian context" appears

weak because it chooses instead to rely on its sovereign democracy to achieve its aims.[45]

Indeed, the Russian concert held at the UNESCO World Heritage site of Palmyra in Syria

was a clumsy display of state-sponsored culture. It intended to build a favorable image of

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[42] Kilcullen, 189.

[43] Phillip Karber and Joshua Thibeault, "Russia's New Generation Warfare," *thepotomacfoundation.org* May 13, 2016, under "Massed Fires," http://www.thepotomacfoundation.org/russias-new-generation-warfare-2/ (accessed September 7, 2016).

[44] Ghulam Dastagir Wardak, *The Voroshilov Lectures Materials From the Soviet General Staff Academy*, vol. 3 of *Issues of Operational Art* (Washington DC: The National Defence University Press, 1992), 193.

[45] Smith, 129.

Russia as a defender of civilization, but it was completely incongruous with the indiscriminate Russian aerial bombardment of the city of Aleppo. This transparently cynical action indicated the true limits of Russian Soft Power. But, at the same time, it provides a telling insight into Russian Smart Power. The concert represents a knowingly transparent attempt to build good will, but in the meantime, the Russian air force was unimpeded in its mission to destroy large swathes of Aleppo in order to crush the rebel resistance. The use of coercive power gained the ends because the attractive façade of the concert either caused sufficient confusion, or it presented an option for neutral and opposed actors to turn a blind eye.

A Russian Soft Power strategy is clearly evident, even acknowledged by the Russian Federation as an "indispensable concept" that has growing relevance.[46] Russian Soft Power differs from Nye's conception of an attractive force applied in good faith, but remains effective on opposed actors outside the cultural barrier despite its lack of plausibility. The Russian interventions in Ukraine and Syria may indicate that, although the Russians are quite capable of an integrated application of Soft and Hard Power, the apparent weakness of their Soft Power is irrelevant, as long as the objective is achieved. The West perceives weak Russian Soft Power as a failure, but the unique brand of Russian Smart Power appears to use the very existence of a Soft Power component to disrupt the normal resistance provided by opposed actors, thereby inducing a passive acceptance of Russian activity. The ability to induce paralysis of an opposed actor

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[46] The Ministry of Affairs of the Russian Federation, *Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation*, February 12, 2013 http://archive.mid.ru//brp_4.nsf/0/76389FEC168189ED44257B2E0039B16D (accessed September 7, 2016).

requires a paradigm of confusion that minimizes awareness of the Russian indiscriminate use of force and lack of respect for international norms.

Current Smart Power theory does not contain a component capable of creating a condition of paralysis. Nye's Smart Power model assumes the polar opposite to be true by prescribing the creation of an open and honest environment, or risk the failure of Smart Power due to destructive interference. The unique brand of Russian Smart Power contains a powerful deception strategy as an additional component that hinders awareness and fosters confusion.

Chapter 4 - Russian Deception

Similar to Vladimir Putin's aim for Ukraine, Moscow is pursuing a strategy

designed to integrate Turkey into a Russian-led Eurasian security alliance able to

counteract the regional influence of NATO. Given the inherent weakness of Russian Soft

Power, Russia must maximize the effectiveness of its Hard Power coercive levers without

causing long-term political damage, while minimizing the adverse reaction from the

broader international community. A critical and essential element of this Smart Power

approach is the use of a deception strategy to minimize the Western reaction and create

time and space, albeit limited, to allow coercive Hard Power to work. As the Russian

concert and the use of precision weapons employment footage in Syria showed,

deception legitimizes Russian Soft Power by either creating confusion, or presenting an

opportunity to turn a blind eye.

As the ultimate political realist, Vladimir Putin could be expected to resort to

different coercive means in Ukraine and Turkey, given his opinion that there are "no

inviolable rules, nor universal values, nor even cast-iron facts . . . there are only

interests."[1] But the overt use of the military instrument of power in Ukraine and Turkey

carries the risk of unwanted escalation and confrontation with the far more capable forces

of the NATO alliance. Furthermore, a full Russian military occupation of Ukraine would

run counter to the aim of achieving *indirect* political control of a sovereign state.[2] The

restriction of Ukraine and Turkey's energy supply is effective, but carries an economic

cost to Russian short-term revenue streams and weakens the confidence of international

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[1] Marvin Kalb, *Imperial Gamble: Putin, Ukraine, and the New Cold War* (Brookings Institution Press, 2015), 226.
[2] Ibid., 235.

investment required for long-term growth. Furthermore, Russia's energy control measures can be countered in the long-term by the expansion of energy storage, diversification of energy sources, and the creation of greater efficiencies in energy consumption, all of which limits the utility of this coercive lever. Overt political coercive diplomacy can be effective, but Russia lacks direct political leverage in Kiev, and although Putin's overtures toward the leader of Turkey's Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party, Selahattin Demirtas, were politically damaging to President Erdogan, the efforts risked driving Turkey back to a closer relationship with NATO.[3]

Multiple interest groups are engaged in violent conflict in Syria and eastern Ukraine, all of which seek to achieve simultaneous, interlocking, overlapping, and opposing interests; many of these groups possess the ability to shape global perceptions through either social or mainstream media. Incomplete information arising from a multitude of competing narratives in the aftermath of a publicized act of violence contributes to the existence of an ambiguous strategic environment. Furthermore, verification of events in Syria and Ukraine is often impossible due to inaccessible locations and hazardous conditions, and the unwillingness of the press to directly cover events leaves a multitude of narratives shaped by individuals, activists, and manipulators. The ambiguous strategic environment serves to amplify the effectiveness of a deliberate deception strategy.

Russian deception capabilities are very sophisticated, and have had the benefit of over one hundred years of development and operational employment in order to create a

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[3] RUDAW, "Demirtas in Moscow for talks with Russian officials," *rudaw.net* Dec 23, 2015, under "ERBIL," http://rudaw.net/english/world/23122015 (accessed November 15, 2016).

higher level of "ambiguity, confusion, or misunderstanding in adversary perceptions."[4]

Deception, or *Maskirovka*, is a critical component of Russian military and political

strategy that has been conceptually revised and refined since its introduction at the

Higher School of Maskirovka in 1904, and was defined in Soviet military doctrine as:

"secrecy, showing deceptive actions, and spreading disinformation" [5] that "contributes to

the achievement of surprise for the actions of forces, the preservation of combat readiness

and the increased survivability of objects."[6] At the operational level, *Maskirovka* creates

confusion for the enemy, however, during the height of the Cold War, Russia developed a

much more sophisticated information weapon called Reflexive Control (RC). This highly

refined means of information warfare transfers bespoke information to the intended

target, which is designed to trigger a specific self-defeating action.[7] The nature of the

information addresses known weaknesses and predictable patterns in the target's "filter,"

which consists of "concepts, knowledge, ideas, and experience."[8] The information

transferred to the target creates a compelling impression of a false strategic environment,

which generates a quasi-automatic reflexive response that the enemy's system is

powerless to resist. The Soviet propaganda that George F. Kennan described in 1946 as

"negative and destructive,"[9] has evolved in the post-Cold War period into a

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[4] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Military Deception*, Joint Publication 3-13.4 (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, January 26 2012), viii.

[5] Timothy L. Thomas, "Russia's Reflexive Control Theory and the Military," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 17, (2004): 239; Ghulam Dastagir Wardak, *The Voroshilov Lectures Materials From the Soviet General Staff Academy*, vol. 3 of *Issues of Operational Art* (Washington DC: The National Defence University Press, 1992), 323.

[6] Joseph W. Caddell, "Deception 101-Primer on Deception," *Strategic Studies Institute* (December 2004): 18. http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub589.pdf (accessed October 1, 2016).

[7] Thomas, 237.

[8] Ibid., 241.

[9] U.S. Department of State, Telegram, George Kennan to George Marshall "Long Telegram," February 22, 1946. Harry S. Truman Administration File, Elsey Papers, 18.

"kaleidoscope" where "light piercing through it is instantly transformed into multiple versions of reality."[10]

In the case of competing RC information weapons between adversaries, the actor that best understands its adversary's information filter weakness can create the best match between the content of the information weapon and the predicted reflexive reaction. In other words, a successful outcome relies on an ability to predict the enemy's response to a specific input.[11] Although the concepts of RC are not exclusive to Russia, Vladimir Putin's often unexpected foreign policy actions, such as the annexation of Crimea and the surprise deployment of combat air power to Syria only detected once the Russian fighters were operationally established, suggests that they play to Russian strengths. Russian RC relies on a coherence of narrative, perfect timing of implementation, rapid reaction to developments, and an appreciation of the duration of the effect. The gradual, matter-of-fact manner in which the covert nature of the Russian conventional military intervention in Crimea became an overt military deployment is a testament to the Russian mastery of deception.[12]

The relationship between the average Russian citizen and the political elite facilitates Russian deception. Vladimir Putin's brand of autocratic illiberal democracy keeps Russian citizens in a state of "political infantilism" due to the lack of national debate about how the levers of power are exercised.[13] Although the cultural barrier limits

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[10] The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, *Fog of Falsehood: Russian Strategy of Deception and the Conflict in Ukraine* (Helsinki: Grano Oy, 2016), 14.

[11] Thomas, 242.

[12] Kristin Ven Bruusgaard, "Crimea and Russia's Strategic Overhaul," *Parameters* 44 no. 3 (Autumn 2014): 81-90. http://search.proquest.com.nduezproxy.idm.oclc.org/docview/1628380476?accountid=12686 (accessed August 8, 2016).

[13] Autonomous Nonprofit Organization Yuri Levada Analytical Center, "On the Growth of Social and Political Infantilism in Russia" *Levada.ru,* June 16, 2014, under "Even more significantly,"

the reach and effectiveness of the Soft Power strategy, it is also quite effective in maintaining a semi-permeable echo-chamber of Russian public support by limiting the cross-contamination of deliberately contradictory domestic and international narratives. George Kennan's observation that "the very disrespect of Russians for objective truth indeed, their disbelief in its existence leads them to view all stated facts as instruments . . . of one ulterior purpose"[14] is still prevalent in modern Russia, where citizens watch Russian state-sponsored news with the full knowledge that the content does not necessarily reflect the truth.[15] This gives Vladimir Putin a greater number of options than some Western leaders when it comes to domestic political restrictions on the use of Hard Power, while the employment of Soft Power only serves to reinforce the image of a non-threatening Russia interested in peace and stability.

According to a controversial Russian media report in 2000, the Russian government sought to create a presidential "political directorate" that would link the Federal Security Service (FSB) to other departments and empower them to create the "necessary" strategic political situations in Russia, explaining that the "political struggle in the informational field needs to be conducted aggressively in order to partially or completely discredit the opposition."[16] Today, the Russian National Defense Management Center in Moscow undoubtedly possesses the centralized authority and institutional reach necessary to control government-wide communications in order to create a credible, coherent, and timely deception narrative.[17]

http://www.levada.ru/2014/05/16/o-roste-sotsialno-politicheskogo-infantilizma-v-rossii/ (accessed September 7, 2016).

[14] U.S. Department of State, Telegram, 7.

[15] Gabriel Gatehouse, "Why Russians Watch Tv News They Don't Trust," *bbc.com.* November 7, 2016, under "In a recent survey," http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-37871543 (accessed November 15, 2016).

[16] The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 45.

[17] Ven Bruusgaard, 81-90.

Russian RC first identifies a weakness in the information filter of its targets in order to tailor an appropriate narrative to underpin the deception strategy. The weakness in the European filter is the narrative that Europe has achieved a Kantian status as a "zone of values" and a "zone of peace" in a post-Hobbesian condition of negotiation and cooperation.[18] Russia's war with Georgia in 2008 was framed strictly as a peace enforcement campaign intended to protect ethnic Russians and naturalized South Ossetians. President Medvedev declared, "My duty as President right from the outset was to protect our fellow citizens and not let the crimes committed against civilians and peacekeepers go unpunished. Russia wants to end this barbarity against the Ossetian people and against our citizens as soon as possible."[19] The European reflex shown in the immediate aftermath was the French agreement to sell Russia the *Mistral* helicopter carrier, which was the one major equipment deficiency that hampered the Russian amphibious operation in Abkhazia.[20]

Given the European instinct to employ the military as a means to deliver humanitarian aid, the Russian RC attack estimated that European leaders would reflexively acknowledge the legitimacy of the aid convoy in Ukraine, when its true purpose was to enable the apparently peaceful presence of Russian armor on Ukrainian soil. This intended to undermine reports of an unacknowledged, massive Russian artillery attack against a Ukrainian mechanized infantry battalion.[21] Vladimir Putin

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[18] Marcel H. Van Herpen, *Putin's Wars* 2nd ed. (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 245.
[19] Jotman, "Invasions compared: Panama 1989 Vs Georgia 2008," *blogspot.com* August 21, 2008, under "The justification for the Russian invasion of Georgia," http://jotman.blogspot.com/2008/08/invasions-compared-panama-1989-vs.html (accessed December 8, 2016).
[20] Van Herpen, 248.
[21] Phillip Karber, and Joshua Thibeault, "Russia's New Generation Warfare," *thepotomacfoundation.org* May 13, 2016, under "Massed Fires," http://www.thepotomacfoundation.org/russias-new-generation-warfare-2/ (accessed September 7, 2016).

publicly described the situation in Donetsk as a "second Leningrad."[22] This message

directly targeted the empathy of the German people, which is driven by tacit guilt for the

actions of the German army during World War 2, but the comparison is incongruous.

The siege of Leningrad resulted in four times more civilian deaths than the bombings of

Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined, which undoubtedly invokes a powerful sense of

collective German guilt, but Donetsk does not compare to Leningrad in scale and

brutality.[23] Nevertheless, a survey of mainstream German media coverage shortly after

the Russian humanitarian convoy shows that the vast majority of reporting posited that

Russia's intervention was justified and humanitarian in nature.[24]

The primary weakness in the American information filter is the fundamental

belief in an inalienable right to freedom and democracy, and the need to apply military

force with extreme restraint in close proximity to civilians, especially given the recent

memory of the damaging and unpopular wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Discussing the

elections of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine, Russian Foreign Minister Sergi

Lavrov stated that "We hope that it will be a free declaration of will . . . and that nobody

will try to ruin it from the outside."[25] This was an attempt to place America on the wrong

side of the defense of democracy to create uncertainty related to a basic value in a region

where the U.S. has marginal interests. The Russian RC strategy estimated that President

Obama's "pivot to the Pacific" narrative translated to a higher reflexive military response

threshold due to a lack of interest in European power politics.[26] Therefore, a narrative

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[22] The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 141.
[23] Anna Reid, *Leningrad: Tragedy of a City Under Siege, 1941-44* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2011), 1.
[24] The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 140.
[25] Kalb, 184.
[26] Van Herpen, 244.

that presented the Russian military as committed to the Global War on Terror and capable of restraint and precision, as evidenced by the release of precision weapons employment footage, would avert a U.S. military response and obscure the fact that the massive use of indiscriminate force remains a feature of modern Russian military doctrine.[27] Furthermore, the RC strategy created the false impression that Putin was embroiled in a crisis that he was seeking to disengage from, as would be the case if the roles were reversed. Consequently, the repeated U.S. proposals for conflict "off ramps" fixed President Obama's intent on pursuing a diplomatic objective that appeared to be achievable, but was permanently just out of reach.[28]

The weakness in the Ukrainian information filter is the issue of power and money caused by a kleptocratic corruption inherent in the volatile political landscape. Ukraine was rated as more corrupt than Russia in 2015, ranking 130th out of the 168 countries on the Transparency International corruption index.[29] President Poroshenko's government was severely threatened by a dispute between the Ukrainian Rada (parliament) chairman, Volodymyr Groysman, and Prime Minister Yatsenyuk because the former approved of the administrative decentralization of the Donbass region in order to terminate hostilities as soon as possible, while the latter would only accept a full restoration of Ukrainian sovereignty.[30] The internal dispute threatened to cause another governmental collapse, as happened to President Yushchenko amid the power struggles of the Orange Revolution

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[27] Wardak, 193.

[28] Kalb, 223.

[29] Kenneth Rapoza, "Corruption Is Killing Ukraine's Economy," *forbes.com* October 14, 2016, under "New Ukraine," http://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2016/10/14/how-corruption-corrodes-ukraines-economy/#1d0038aa67cf (accessed November 28, 2016).

[30] Congressional Research Service, *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), 6.

that resulted in the election of the pro-Russian President Yanukovych in 2010.[31]

President Yanukovych's government was offered a fifteen billion dollar loan in exchange

for a refusal to sign the European Union Association Agreement,[32] with a full expectation

that embezzlement would play a part in the Ukrainian decision making. At the same

time, Yanukovych was coerced with "brutal" political blackmail that had the potential to

financially ruin him personally, and undoubtedly put him at risk from physical harm at

the hands of the Ukrainian oligarchs should the loan not materialize.[33]

Russian RC simultaneously exploited the weaknesses of the Europeans,

Americans, and Ukrainians by presenting a disingenuous and incongruous offer to

"freeze" the conflict in Ukraine and force another round of elections to demonstrate a

façade of progress. In return, the Europeans indicated a willingness to remove economic

sanctions on Russia incrementally, in step with achievement-in-principle of individual

aspects of the Minsk-2 agreement, as opposed to the original demands for full compliance

before removal of sanctions.[34] The deception disrupted the appreciation of the true

nature of the Russian coercion, which caused confusion and weakened global resistance

to Russian activities. In turn, this legitimized the weak Russian attempt to persuade the

world of its commitment to a political process. As a result, fresh divisions resurfaced

along the old political fault lines in Kiev because an element of Poroshenko's

government was attracted to the principle of decentralized power in eastern Ukraine. The

Russian use of deception leverages the adversary's desire for stability against them by

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[31] Ibid., 7.

[32] Van Herpen, 243.

[33] Jan Techau, "Putin's Ukraine Blackmail Is Not an EU Foreign Policy Failure," *carnigieeurope.eu* November 26, 2013, under "Add to this the brutal political blackmail," http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/?fa=53715 (accessed November 28, 2016).

[34] Congressional Research Service, *Ukraine: Current Issues*, 31.

providing the false hope of peaceful resolution. This fosters internal discord among adversaries, which distracts from the Russian coercive action, paralyzes opposed actors, and completes the application of Russian Smart Power.

The reaction to the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight 17 on 17 July, 2014 by a Russian BUK SA-17 missile, highlighted the impressive levels of command, control, and coordination that Russia maintains over the many elements of its deception machine, even in the event of a strategic shock. Firm control of the narrative was essential if Russian deception was to withstand international scrutiny. Immediately after this tragic incident, and before any other authority had the ability to react, Vladimir Putin accused the Ukrainian government of carrying out the atrocity, using distraction techniques such as the mention of the deployment of a Ukrainian BUK missile system and the presence of a Ukrainian SU-25 fighter aircraft equipped with air-to-air missiles. A combination of radar plots and evidence provided by Almaz-Antey, the Russian military industrial producer of the BUK SA-17, supported the narrative delivered by the Russian President, which maintained coherence for long enough for the initial outrage to subside.[35]

Conflicting information delivered by the semi-autonomous rebel leaders of Donetsk and Luhansk damaged the credibility of the deception, not only in relation to the MH17 airliner tragedy, but also the presence of Russian conventional military forces in Ukraine in general.[36] Nevertheless, the international outrage disappeared from mainstream media, and the desired effect was achieved. The importance of *time* in deception relates not only to the timing of execution, but also to the rapidity of reaction to

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[35] Olga Ivshina, "Flight MH17: Russia and its changing story," *bbc.com* 16 October, 2015, under "A few days after the air crash," http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34538142 (accessed November 27, 2016).
[36] Kalb, 175.

a developing situation, and an understanding of the temporal half-life of the deceptive measure in use. The expected duration of the deception is matched to the effective deception period required to achieve the desired effect. Vladimir Putin could not plan to deceive the West as to the true purpose of Russian military activity in Ukraine permanently. Therefore, he relied on the narrow window of opportunity opened by deception to evade the traditional barriers to theater entry imposed by the United Nations Charter and the basic norms of sovereignty in order to create a condition of coercion, and he then used disingenuous Soft Power to reaffirm the new status quo by making it more desirable than an alternate discord.

It is of critical importance to understand the role of deception in Russian Smart Power. Sophisticated, timely, and well-coordinated deception successfully obfuscates the true nature of Russian coercion and legitimizes the weak Russian Soft Power means by diminishing the destructive interference. As the effective deception period expires, overt and direct coercive measures are introduced. Without deception, immediate application of Russian overt Hard Power would meet superior resistance, and Russian Soft Power would be denied the opportunity to act, which would lead to failure. The analysis shows that deception-enabled Russian Smart Power resulted in European acquiescence over the adjustment to the terms of the Minsk-2 sanction removal process, weak American resistance to Russian military coercion, and the fracturing of Ukrainian unity and resolve.

Smart Power provides Russia the ability to exert influence that its Hard Power and Soft Power cannot achieve in isolation. But, analysis of examples of Russian coercion and attraction has shown that in Russia's case, the combination of individual components of power is also unlikely to be sufficient to influence the intended actor.

This is because Russia is not just using a crude approximation of Western Smart Power, but intelligently applying RC to increase the effectiveness of its own application of Smart Power. As Marvin Kalb observes, Russian military strategy aims to "cripple a state before it even realizes that the conflict has begun."[37] Russian deception is an integral and crucial component of the Russian Smart Power strategy that has provided an order of magnitude increase in Russian influence in the contemporary strategic environment.

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[37] Ibid., 235.

Chapter 5 – Understanding the Nature of Russian Smart Power

The two-dimensional limitations of Joseph Nye's concentric rings Smart Power model leads to the incorrect conclusion that Russia relies on coercion alone to achieve its aims. Highlighting weak Russian Soft Power as evidence of a failure of Russian Smart Power fails to account for the Russian adaption of the concept. Upon application of coercion and attraction in Nye's model, a target actor has the option to either succumb or not, which creates a movement in only one of two directions. The true nature of Russian Smart Power relies on well-coordinated and highly sophisticated deception to obfuscate the application of Hard Power, which confuses opposed actors and creates a reflexive response that varies depending on the nature of the actor. Assisted by the Russian worldview of multi-power polarity, successful Russian coercion of opposed actors expands the reach of its Soft Power to include neutral actors, and nationalism reinforces Soft Power effectiveness on aligned actors inside the cultural barrier. Deception also veils the cynical, disingenuous, and incongruous nature of Russian Soft Power, which is then legitimized due to the confusion and subsequent paralysis of opposed actors.

The dynamics of Russian Smart Power differ significantly from Nye's original conception, therefore, a bespoke definition is warranted. This paper defines the unique brand of Russian Smart Power as *deception-enabled coercion and legitimized attraction*. It functions in four dimensions by first, executing an RC attack to *disrupt* the awareness of the target actor, which provides a temporary window of opportunity. Second, obfuscated *coercion* alters the target actor's behavior and triggers a movement in a reflex-driven direction. Direct and explicit coercion is applied to augment the effect and mitigate the finite period of the deception. Third, Russian actions are *legitimized* by the

confused response of opposed actors due to the existence of a clear Soft Power attractive

force, regardless of its implausibility. Fourth, the paralysis results in a de facto *attraction*

of opposed actors to the objective, which co-opts neutral actors.
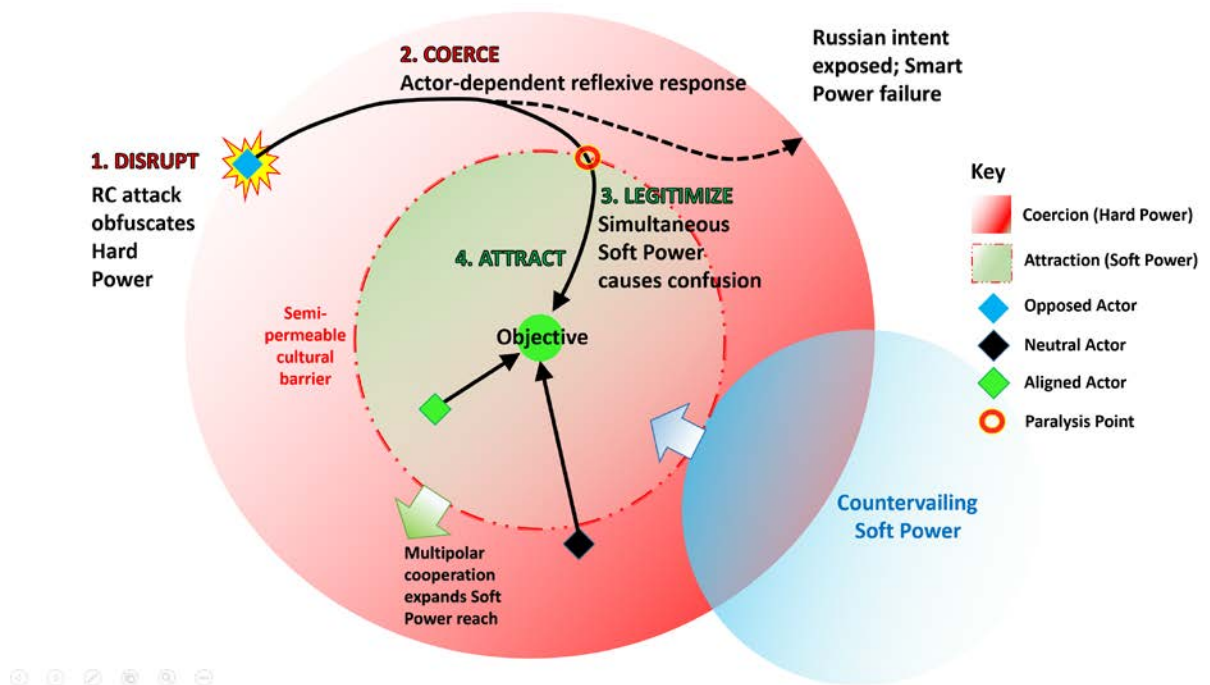
Figure 1. Russian Smart Power Model.

As the Russian Smart Power model represented in Figure 1 shows, the unique

Russian brand of deception-enabled Smart Power operates not in a bi-directional polarity

as described by Nye, but spherically, in three dimensions. A well-timed and carefully

coordinated RC attack is depicted at Step 1. The resultant obfuscation *disrupts* the

destructive interference described by Nye, which triggers a three-dimensional vector of

the opposed actor into the Smart Power sphere. The trajectory through the sphere

represents the effectiveness of the RC attack and the resistance of the opposed actor to

coercion, which is depicted along the line at Step 2. The more directly the trajectory

points at the objective, the more likely the Smart Power strategy will succeed because the existence of a simultaneous Soft Power strategy seeks to legitimize Russian actions by confusing opposed actors before the true intent of Russian activity is exposed.

Step 3 depicts the confusion and paralysis point of the opposed actor and the subsequent legitimization of Russian Soft Power. This also facilitates the co-option of neutral actors by enhancing weak Soft Power despite the existence of a cultural barrier, which is depicted by the dashed red line. The Russian cooperative, as opposed to competitive, multipolar worldview expands the volume of the attractive inner sphere to subsume those culturally diverse, neutral actors who welcome new-found Russian openness, but also admire Russia's ability to coerce with apparent impunity. The cultural barrier is semi-permeable because the average Russian citizen does not look beyond the nationalist strategic message, so does not routinely analyze Russian activity through a skeptical lens. Once inside the inner sphere, all actors are attracted to the objective, as depicted by Step 4.

In terms of the Russian Smart Power model, Russian obfuscation of the true nature of its coercion is depicted by a red shade gradient that darkens as the opposed actor travels through the Smart Power sphere. The darker the shade, the more direct and explicit the coercion. At the point of an RC attack, Russian coercive methods are unclear and ill-defined. As was the case in both eastern Ukraine and Turkey, obfuscated or indirect coercion became direct as the time-limited deception lost effectiveness. By contrast, the existence of a Soft Power strategy, depicted by the dark green shading, is clear to the opposed actor targeted for attack, as was the case with the German response to the humanitarian convoy. But, Russian Soft Power may appear weak and ineffective

to actors with different perspectives, who view it as cynical and fabricated. This is indicated by a translucent green shading at different points of the circumference. Finally, a strong, irrefutable countervailing Soft Power strategy that intends to shrink the size of the Russian Smart Power inner sphere at its weakest point is represented by the opposing blue sphere. The countervailing Soft Power strategy must turn Russian attractive forces, represented by the green shading, into dark red by exposing all actors to the destructive interference that should naturally occur between violent Russian Hard Power and the false premise of Russian Soft Power. The final chapter of this paper offers ways to create such a strategy.

Chapter 6 - Discussion

The effectiveness of the Western response to Russia's revanchist use of force depends on the ability to understand the nature of Russian Smart Power. The perceived ineffectiveness of Russian Soft Power does not provide an accurate measure of its importance to Russian Smart Power. Poorly understood integration of ambiguous Russian Hard Power with weak Russian Soft Power has, so far, enabled Russian strategic interests. The "kaleidoscope" of realities exacerbated the confusion over events in Ukraine, Turkey, and Syria, which led to an ineffective array of responses and subsequent strategic paralysis in the West.[1] The analysis shows that Smart Power employed by Vladimir Putin differs markedly from the current Western understanding of the term. Russian Smart Power employs deception to obfuscate its Hard Power. As the deception is expected to expire, explicit and direct coercion replaces or augments the unacknowledged use of Hard Power. Amid an unclear strategic environment, Russia simultaneously employs comparatively weak, but welcome Soft Power, which is often cynical, disingenuous, and incongruous. This creates sufficient confusion to legitimize its attractive force by paralysing adversaries. Finally, this enhances Russian Soft Power and expands its reach by leveraging nationalism and Russian cooperative multipolarity.

This chapter offers three recommendations to assist in the continual task of the refinement of strategy and to improve the transparency of the strategic environment, which will minimize the strategic shock caused by Russian action. The first recommendation proposes an offensive posture by increasing the means to attack the fabric of the Russian information machine and the substance of the Russian message that

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[1] The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, *Fog of Falsehood: Russian Strategy of Deception and the Conflict in Ukraine* (Helsinki: Grano Oy, 2016), 14.

carries information weapons to intended targets. The second recommendation offers a

defensive approach to prevent Russian Smart Power from capitalizing on values-based,

forthright Western diplomacy. The final recommendation proposes the use of the

Russian Smart Power model in reverse to neutralize Russia in the same way it neutralized

the West. The paper concludes by providing the USEUCOM planners ways to recognize

and interpret Russian Smart Power in order to assist them in their efforts "to secure U.S.

national interests and support a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace."[2]

The Russian strategic messaging that acts as a vehicle for its deception strategy

must be countered at every opportunity. This offensive recommendation uses

information to pre-empt and expose the Russian Smart Power strategy. By correctly

identifying the information filter target of Russian RC, opposed actors could improve the

reaction time and effectiveness of the evidence used to expose the true nature of Russian

coercion and attraction wherever it exists in the contested environment. The

disingenuous purpose of Russian Soft Power, as demonstrated by the humanitarian aid

convoy in Ukraine, could easily be exposed and the beneficial effect for Russia negated,

but only if Putin's actions are anticipated and immediately countered through diplomacy

and the relentless use of factual information across all media outlets. The role of

nationalist pride as a Soft Power enhancing effect within the cultural barrier presents a

potential avenue to disrupt Vladimir Putin's Smart Power strategy. The weakness in the

Russian information filter is the Russian people's support for Vladimir Putin. However,

the projection of a standard anti-Russian narrative will have limited effect, and could

strengthen support for Putin. In order to effectively counter Russian Smart Power,

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[2] EUCOM MISSION, "Commander Priorities," *eucom.mil* 2016, under "EUCOM is engaged, postured, and ready," http://www.eucom.mil/mission/commander-priorities (accessed November 29, 2016).

NATO and the U.S. should be prepared to use RC techniques that target Vladimir Putin's credibility in an attempt to undermine his domestic support.

An effective RC attack on Russia requires a deep understanding of the Russian history, geography, ideology, and demography that comprise its strategic culture. The "golden era" of Russian studies peaked during the Cold War, followed by a sharp decline in academic understanding.[3] Investment in government-sponsored institutes for Russian studies should be increased in order to rebuild understanding of the new Russia. This would facilitate a more pro-active and better-focused information strategy by providing credible and effective strategic messaging to existing initiatives. A comprehensive approach should include the Russian-language radio broadcast stations in Ukraine, the Baltics, and Poland,[4] television and social media outlets, and even modern-day equivalents of the underground information networks such as the Samizdat movement of the Cold War era.[5]

NATO represents an enabling and supporting network for U.S. power that spans Europe and the Middle East, and Turkey represents a critical node that must be defended to facilitate the pursuit of U.S. regional interests. Following the failed military coup, the lack of Western support for President Erdogan heightened diplomatic tension and threatened to drive key allies apart. The U.S. Secretary of State chastised Turkey over the manner in which the government sought to restore security, and European leaders

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[3] Pavel Koshkin and Ksenia Zubacheva, "What happened to the 'golden age' of Russian Studies in America?" *Russia-direct.org* May 12, 2016, under "The period of the Cold War," http://www.russia-direct.org/analysis/what-happened-golden-age-russian-studies-america (accessed November 29, 2016).

[4] Congressional Research Service, *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), 29.

[5] Albert Parry, "Samizdat is Russia' Underground Press," *nytimes.com,* March 15, 1970, under "'Do It Yourself,'" http://www.nytimes.com/1970/03/15/archives/samizdat-is-russias-underground-press-russias-underground-press.html?_r=0 (accessed February 12, 2017).

accused the Turkish President of "preparing" the coup intentionally.[6] But the source and

motive behind the coup are inconsequential because Putin's behavior is consistent with

Russian Smart Power and the attempt to legitimize Soft Power. The attractive, but

cynical Russian message of support swiftly capitalized on the West's criticism of an

important ally. The false Russian promise of cooperative multipolarity necessitates an

active defense during turbulent diplomatic events, which involves the anticipation of

dubious, but damaging Russian Soft Power.

In order to reinforce the fragile diplomatic situation, the commander of

USEUCOM offered Turkey a warm commitment to strategic partnership.[7] Although the

West's rush to chastise the Turkish government may well have been in line with universal

values, it appeared to Turkey as an incongruous Soft Power attempt, which shielded and

enhanced the cynical gesture by Putin. Despite the U.S. reversal of tone, the coup

triggered a temporary suspension of Turkish Officers from the F-35 fighter program, in

which Turkey is a heavily-invested industrial development partner. A decision to

publicly take a firm opposing opening stance against an ally, and then to revert to

messages of support may backfire, unless public and private diplomacy defends key allies

by pre-empting the legitimized allure of Russian Soft Power.

Turkey continues to struggle against internal physical, political, and economic

instability and faces the continual challenge of balancing coexistent vital relationships

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[6] Duncan Robinson, and Mehul Srivastava, "US and EU leaders warn Turkey's Erdogan over post-coup crackdown," *ft.com* July 18, 2016, under "We urge the government of Turkey," https://www.ft.com/content/b82ef35a-4cc3-11e6-88c5-db83e98a590a (accessed November 29, 2016).
[7] General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, "EUCOM Commander Statement to Media – Turkey," *eucom.mil* August 22, 2016, under "And Turkey can count on NATO," http://www.eucom.mil/press-room/press-releases/eucom-commander-statement-to-media-turkey (accessed November 29, 2016).

with Russia and America.[8] Although Turkey has developed deep ties to the West,

continued Russian goodwill is currently the greater factor in the Turkish assessment of its

vital national interests because membership of NATO does little to mitigate the leverage

Russia holds over Turkey. The loss of Turkey from NATO to a Russian Eurasian

military alliance would have far-reaching consequences for U.S. national interests in the

Middle East and NATO's ability to defend its vulnerable southern flanks.

Finally, a Smart Power strategy should be used against Russia to lift the fog of a

constructed uncertainty that shrouds Russian strategy and enables Russia to play the role

of a stealth realist in a neo-liberal cooperative environment. The eastward expansion of

NATO into Russia's "near abroad" is portrayed by Russia as a serious threat to its

national security.[9] The NATO decision to include Poland, Hungary, and the Czech

Republic in 1997 as part of the NATO-Russia Founding Act was accompanied by a "set

of understandings" intended to articulate the future security construct for Europe that

positioned NATO as the primary guarantor of security in all of Europe, including the

former soviet republics. However, Russia did not, and would never agree to this one-

sided "understanding," and, as a result, Putin's argument against NATO encroachment

reflects the honest belief in Russia's right to counteract it in any way possible.[10] Due to

the strength of feeling surrounding this subject, a subtle attempt to reverse the resistance

through the use of a counter-narrative would undoubtedly fail, and attempts to revive the

2008 Bucharest summit plan to integrate Ukraine and Georgia as full members of NATO

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[8] Congressional Research Service, *Turkey: Background and U.S. Relations In Brief* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), 2.

[9] Russian Federation President, *Russian National Security Strategy*, December 31, 2015, under "106," http://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/OtrasPublicaciones/Internacional/2016/Russian-National-Security-Strategy-31Dec2015.pdf (accessed September 7, 2016).

[10] Robert. E Hunter, "Geopolitics and the Problem of Russian Power," *Prism* 6, no. 2 (2016): 14.

will either lead to political embarrassment at best, or at worst, a mutually destructive state of war against Russia.[11]

Nevertheless, Russia remains open to closer cooperation, stating that it is "prepared for the development of relations with NATO based on equality for the purpose of strengthening general security in the Euro-Atlantic region."[12] The term *equality* is telling. Vladimir Putin seeks a return to great power status, meaning that if the U.S. behaves in a manner that Russia perceives to lack respect for its ability and right to protect its national interests, then relations will continue to deteriorate. A NATO Article 10 expansion should not be pursued for any former Soviet republics. Instead, NATO should offer Russia *equality* by extending an Article 10 NATO accession invitation directly to Vladimir Putin.

Such a bold political move would clearly require diplomatic preparation of all twenty-eight members before the execution of the offer in order to suppress the inevitable vetos that would come from the countries most threatened by Russia. The effect would degrade the political capital that Vladimir Putin has repeatedly used to project his agenda across Europe and cause incredible suffering and hardship. His inevitable rebuke of the offer would remove the artificial veil of cooperative spirit and undermine his own credibility.

This course of action is the operationalization of Russian Smart Power in reverse. First, a coordinated deception strategy would disrupt the destructive interference by concealing the fact that the true nature of the offer to join NATO is a bluff that expects an

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[11] Ibid., 15.

[12] Russian Federation President, *Russian National Security Strategy*, December 31, 2015, under "107," http://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/OtrasPublicaciones/Internacional/2016/Russian-National-Security-Strategy-31Dec2015.pdf (accessed September 7, 2016).

outright rejection. Crucially, the Russian people would then need to be attracted by a persuasive Soft Power strategy underpinned by an RC attack that manipulates the weakness in the Russian information filter. Putin would portray the offer as an affront to Russian interests, but efforts to subvert the NATO RC attack would be anticipated and countermanded by an official end to NATO's expansionist policy with respect to all former Soviet interests. The malign effects caused by Putin's autocratic grip on the freedom of the Russian people would be used to separate him from the support of his citizens, and the inevitable rejection of the offer would legitimize increased coercive diplomatic pressure directed solely at Vladimir Putin. This would create a diminishing spiral of support, which would actively shrink the Russian Smart Power sphere and Vladimir Putin's ability to exert damaging influence.

A Smart Power strategy is only an "intelligent combination of Soft and Hard Power" if the interplay of the individual components provides a synergistic improvement to the whole.[13] Vladimir Putin has understood the strategic environment, appreciated the weakness of his means, and pinpointed the key to Smart Power that mitigates the challenges he faces. Smart Power theory has much to offer the military planners of USEUCOM, but to reap the benefits, they must be able to recognize and interpret Russian actions as they relate to the unique brand of Russian Smart Power.

To accomplish this task, an understanding of Russian history, culture, and interests is a vital prerequisite, but in order to fully deconstruct a Russian Smart Power strategy, the first and most important step is to understand the target and purpose of the Russian RC attack. This will clarify the intent of ill-defined and unacknowledged

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[13] Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S Nye, *A Smarter, More Secure America*, (Washington DC: The CSIS Press, 2007), 7.

Russian coercion, and thus present an opportunity to divert the trajectory of an actor out of the Russian Smart Power sphere by anticipating and mitigating the impending Russian overt coercive measures. Finally, disingenuous Russian Soft Power must be identified as being related to the Smart Power strategy and countered by highlighting its incongruous nature before paralysis of the target actor sets in.

Russia has adopted Smart Power theory to ensure success in the pursuit of its own national interests, and it has adapted the application of Smart Power to mitigate its strategic challenges. As a result, Russia has out-maneuvred the West and re-ordered the global stage. The West must now respond and this paper offers a starting point by shedding light on the true nature of Russian Smart Power.

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Vita

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